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ABSTRACT

This booklet presents some of the administrative considerations and activities associated with the initiation of an extended day care program for parochial elementary school students. Introductory sections describe a typical extended school day and discuss the social need for extended school day programs because of the increased number of working parents. Next, the benefits of a Catholic school extension program to working families, to the schools themselves, and to the educational growth and development of students are identified. The following section of the booklet describes several obstacles to establishing a program, including administrative burdens, concerns about working mothers, lack of available program space, and financial concerns. Administrative planning is discussed in the next section, including policy considerations, needs assessment, suggestions for a startup sequence and timetable, and staffing. Last, sample forms of the following items are provided: program handbook, pupil application form, teacher contract, and an emergency card. (DST)

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EXTENSION PROGRAM



THE CATHOLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

EXTENSION PROGRAM

by
Arlene F. & Joseph P. McElligott

Published by the
National Catholic Educational Association



Introduction

"For those children whose parents do work outside the home, there is a serious shortage of affordable, quality day care. Employers, governments and private agencies need to improve both the availability and quality of child care services."

(Pastoral Letter on Catholic Social Teaching and the U.S. Economy, October 5, 1985, National Conference of Catholic Bishops, Washington, D.C., p. 56)

At a time when schools are being asked to further assist the family, this book sketches a very practical way to help parents who work outside the home, a way to heed the call of the Catholic bishops for available, quality child care.

The authors, Arlene and Joseph McElligott, present some of the administrative considerations and activities associated with the initiation of extended day care for parochial school students. Their suggestions reflect their extensive experience with day care within a parish setting.

This publication is an excellent practical "starter" manual. The authors' more detailed and comprehensive extension program handbook, along with parent and child manuals, will be published in 1987 by William H. Sadlier, Inc.

Special acknowledgment is due Jan Williamson Lynn for the illustrations and Wendy Royston for assistance with publication.

We sincerely thank the authors for their timely contribution and encourage the leaders of Catholic elementary schools to assess their own students' needs for a school extension program.

Brother Robert J. Kealey, FSC
President

Sister Carleen Reck, SSND
Executive Director

Department of Elementary Schools
National Catholic Educational Association

About the Authors

Arlene McElligott, a former primary grade teacher, was herself a "latchkey child" who went home from a parochial school to an empty house. Today she administers the Extension Center of St. Francis of Assisi School in Sacramento's central city, serves as a consultant for other parochial schools which wish to initiate or improve extended day care operations, and, under the auspices of the California State Department of Education and private school organizations, conducts seminars and workshops for parochial school day care providers.

Dr. Joseph McElligott, her husband, is the Director of the Education Division of the California Catholic Conference, a coordinating agency for the twelve (arch)dioceses in California. A former member of the President's National Advisory Council on the Education of Disadvantaged Children and a founder of the California Association of Compensatory Education, Dr. McElligott has had extensive experience with inner city education and the implementation of governmentally assisted education programs.

The McElligotts are the parents of four young adults who attended Catholic elementary and secondary schools.

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in a nutshell....

An Extension Program Day



Teresa and Michael Martinez, the children of Mrs. Maria Martinez, a single working mother, arrive at St. Mary's Extension Center each school day at 7:30 a.m. Mrs. Martinez, who needs to be at her secretarial job at 8:00 a.m., checks the children in with Miss Dexter who is on the early shift in the Extension Center, a renovated classroom on the first floor of St. Mary's Elementary School.

The Center is a homey place furnished with various sized tables and chairs, some donated sofas and rockers, brightly painted bookcases and perky curtains. Centers of interest include a block corner, the play house with its magic chest of "dress up" clothes for boys and girls, a cabinet loaded with table games, an art corner with easels, a science table where tulip bulbs are sprouting, and a reference library for use in completing classroom assignments.

It doesn't look like school. It looks more like home, and it is for forty-six parochial school students in the early morning and late afternoon hours. For the kindergarteners like Michael, who attend class only 2½ hours a day, it's really home. Each of the kindergarteners even has his or her own cot for a snooze after lunch.

Early morning activities in this "home away from home" consist mostly of quiet table games, chatting with school chums, completing last minute homework, and telling the Extension teacher about the previous evening's happenings. At 8:45 a.m. Teresa, the 3rd grader, along with thirty other children in Grades 1 through 6, goes to the playground to join the rest of the school's students for the flag salute before classes begin. Miss Dexter brings Michael and the fifteen other kindergarteners to the kindergarten classroom where they join ten other children for the morning's instructional program.

At lunch time the 16 kindergarteners in the Extension Center take their lunches from home out of their "cubbies," pick up their milk from the Center's refrigerator, and join Miss Dexter and Grandma Mame for lunch. Grandma Mame lives nearby in a seniors' residence. She's a special lady who loves to read stories and even has her own lunch box.

After lunch the Extension Center kindergarteners enjoy organized and free play in the empty school yard. Sometimes Miss Dexter and Grandma Mame take them for a short walk to the nearby park.

Around 1:15, Michael and the other five-year olds are getting sleepy. Out come the cots from their stack, blankets from their "cubbies," and the children doze off to a story read by Grandma Mame or to the music played by Miss Dexter on the old upright piano.

At 2:30 p.m., afternoon staff arrive. Michael and the other sleepy heads get up for the afternoon's activities. Mr. Sullivan, a physical education major at the university, checks the athletic equipment and Miss Williams puts out the apples, cheese sticks and milk for the afternoon snack.

At 3:00 p.m. Teresa and the other children explode into the Extension Center.

"Hi Mr. Sullivan! What are we going to play today?"

"Miss Williams! What's for snack? I'm starving!"

The nutritious afternoon snack, served buffet style from a counter, is varied each day. Sometimes the foods are selected and purchased by Miss Dexter with the kindergarteners on an excursion walk to the supermarket earlier in the afternoon.

In the after school hours, the Extension Program is able to use the school's gymnasium and the school yard. The library is also available three afternoons a week.

Afternoon activities are both structured and nonstructured, and they offer variation. Today Teresa and some 3rd and 4th graders are planning a puppet show which will be given for all the other children next week. Michael and some of the other kindergarten and first grade boys will enjoy learning kickball skills with Mr. Sullivan. Other children will be using modeling clay to sculpt Wizard of Oz characters whom they saw on the VCR showing of the movie on the minimum day last week. Homework help will be available.

After her busy day at the office, Mrs. Martinez will arrive at the Extension Center at 5:30 p.m. Teresa and Michael will run to greet her, a staff member may chat with her about the children's day, and it's off to home and supper for the Martinez family.

"I like the Extension Program," says Mrs. Martinez. "The fees—\$60 a month for Teresa and \$75 for my kindergartener, Michael—are really quite reasonable compared to other child care programs and snack is included. I can claim an income tax credit for about a quarter of the fees."

"It's so reassuring to have my children in parochial school care all day with people who provide them with the attention I'd like to give them if I didn't have to work."

The Need for Extension Programs



"Large numbers of women have entered the labor force in order to put their talent and education to greater use but also out of sheer economic necessity. Many families need two salaries if they are to live in a decently human fashion. Female-headed households often depend heavily on the mother's income to stay off the welfare rolls."

(Pastoral Letter on Catholic Social Teaching and the U.S. Economy, p. 41)

Many Catholic families have a need for affordable day care for school age children in a Christian environment. The number of single parent families is increasing. In the case of traditional families, economic conditions often necessitate that the mother be employed. Nationally, 65% of elementary school age children are in families where a single parent or both parents work outside the home. Catholic working parents are often faced with the dual problem of finding parochial school education and appropriate before-and-after school care for their children.

Due to commercial urban redevelopment, lack of satisfactory or affordable family housing in central cities, a decline in the number of Catholic school age children in metropolitan cores, and other factors, some older parochial schools are operating at less than full capacity. At the same time, Catholic families in suburbia often find that parochial school opportunities are limited or that there are long waiting lists of applicants. A frequent criticism of some Catholic school systems is that an increasing number of non-Catholic children are being served by central city Catholic schools while Catholic children in outlying areas have limited access to Catholic education. In some dioceses there are undersubscribed schools with declining numbers of school age children, yet few schools in communities where the Catholic school-age population is growing.

The need for before-and-after school care is not limited to the inner city. More affluent areas and suburbia also have many single parent families and families wherein the mother works outside of the home.

Benefits of a Catholic School Extension Program



Creatively addressing this community problem are some parochial schools which have expanded their staffing and scheduling to serve families on an extended day basis. We like to call such a service an "Extension Program" because that title closely describes what such a program should be: an extension of the home and family and an extension of the school. The carefully planned introduction and implementation of an extension program at parochial schools is beneficial to Catholic working families, to the schools themselves, and to the educational growth and development of students.

Family Benefits

Many working parents, who may reside in outlying areas, earn their living in central city occupations, sometimes near undersubscribed and/or economically struggling parochial schools. Enroute to their jobs, it is convenient for these parents to entrust their children to the central city school, knowing that both formal Catholic classroom education and professional extended day care will be provided until the pickup time for the trek home.

Whether the school be in the central city or in suburbia, undoubtedly within the existing parish school population there are those "latchkey" children who go to empty homes and apartments after the parochial school dismisses. The provision of affordable after-school care for such children alleviates much parental anxiety.

Even for those families who have been able to place their children in parochial schools and have secured the babysitting services of a neighbor for afternoon supervision, the consolidation of schooling and extended day care in a professionally administered and staffed Catholic environment is often deemed more desirable from viewpoints of both economic and child development.

A Catholic elementary school can provide valuable assistance to Catholic working families if the school is able to become a "7 to 6" operation.

Benefits for the School

The provision of an extension program swells enrollment. By attracting students from a broader geographical area, it may also increase the proportion of Catholic enrollees, a factor to consider from a faith community perspective.

By serving the children of downtown employees, supportive ties between the central city school and the urban business community are strengthened.

A movement to extension hour operations can create additional employment opportunities for some parishioners and, occasionally, for some previously part-time school personnel.

The late afternoon supervised use of a school plant for extension programming reduces the amount of vandalism sometimes experienced at unoccupied facilities.

Benefits for Children

Rather than fending for themselves without supervision or being cared for in the limited environment of a babysitter's residence, children in a professionally operated extension program experience a rich diversity of growth activities within a Catholic environment, complementary to the philosophy and value systems of the school and family.

Because the extension program usually attracts enrollment from beyond the geographical boundaries of the territorial parish, a heterogeneous mixture of children from various racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic backgrounds can be realized. Within the Christian environment of the extension program center, children learn to respect individual differences and to grow in personal skills for living in a pluralistic society.

Regular communications between the classroom teacher and the adult leaders in the extension program help assure consistency in approaches to children and often identify areas wherein extension program tutorial assistance or enrichment activities can be of special help to the individual students. After-hours access to many of the resources of the total school, coupled with the activity-based resources of the extension program center itself, helps assure a rich and diversified environment for child growth and development rarely matched in separate day care institutions or in private care arrangements. The flexible time structure of the extension program facilitates individualized activities associated with student interests.

The proximity of the extension program center and its scheduled staff of caring adults is a reassuring element in children's daily lives.

Through the operation of an extension program, the Catholic school provides needed care for children of working parents and helps assure the safety and growth of these children in a stimulating Christian community environment.

Obstacles to Establishing an Extension Program



"Another Administrative Burden!"

Most Catholic elementary schools could hardly be called "top heavy" with administration! Typically, the school principal has a plethora of leadership duties and functions which consume his or her hours. To add to that burden additional daily responsibilities for early morning and late afternoon program operations is neither realistic nor prudent. While total school operations, such as the extension program, should come under the general administrative control of the principal, it is critical that the day-to-day supervision and coordination of the extension program be entrusted to a program director who has the delegated authority for broad decision making. To expect the principal to personally administer the extension program is to doom the program and to overburden the principal.

"Mother's Place Is in the Home!"

Some parish and school administrators have expressed the opinion that the provision of extension program services would be an invitation to mothers to leave their place in the home for the workplace. We respectfully point out that today's economy often necessitates families "to rely on the wages of two or even three members just to get by." (*Pastoral Letter*, p. 6.) Rather than encouraging the absence of mothers from the home, a quality Catholic school extension program could provide peace of mind for mothers who are already out of the home and whose children may be fending for themselves or in less than optimum day care situations. "Discrimination against women is compounded by the lack of adequate child care services." (*Pastoral Letter*, p. 42)

"We Have No Space!"

This may be the case. However, a creative examination of building utilization in total parish plants might reveal opportunities whereby rescheduling could free up space for before-and-after school extension

program operations. Other options can include the program-supported lease of relocatable buildings and/or nearby private facilities.

"Day Care Would Be Too Expensive for Our Parents!"

Our experience has shown that prudently operated Catholic school extension programs can offer quality care at a cost lower than most other community child care alternatives. Dependent upon their income, working parents can also receive a federal income tax *credit* of up to 30% of extension program fees.

Administrative Planning for a Parish School Extension Program



A successful extension program is usually one for which there has been careful planning. It is better to postpone the opening of a program rather than to jump into operations without an adequate review of policy considerations, a needs assessment, and comprehensive and sequential program design.

Policy Considerations

Prior to the initiation of a needs assessment process, the planner, (possibly the potential extension program director), should be clear about lines of authority and policy making. While variations exist in school structures, they usually include some of the following:

- a parish school principal with administrative and supervisory responsibilities for all school programs including the envisioned extension program;
- a local school or education board with advisory or policy making responsibilities;
- a local parish committee or board with advisory or policy making responsibilities;
- a pastor with varying degrees of administrative and supervisory responsibility for all church-sponsored or operated programs, including the school, its extension program, and the total parish plant.
- a diocesan administrator, e.g., a superintendent, with administrative and supervisory responsibilities for many schools and their extension programs;
- a diocesan board with advisory or policy making responsibilities for numerous schools and their extension programs;

Having determined the chain of command, having identified whatever controlling policies may be in place and having consulted with the appropriate supervisor, the planner (or potential extension program director) should proceed with a needs assessment.

Needs Assessment

Needs of families

The following are some of the questions that might be asked of parents who have indicated some interest in an extension program:

- Do you have needs for before and after school care, or both?
- In what grades are the children for whom you need extension program services?
- How early in the morning do you need extension program services?
- How late in the afternoon/evening do you need extension program services?
- Do you expect your child to do homework assignments in the extension program?
- Would you want to participate in an extension program parent education series and/or in a parent advisory group?
- What are your expectations about the types of activities provided in an extension program?

Needs of students

The planner, in consultation with appropriate school personnel who are familiar with the characteristics of the student body, the parish community, potential extension program enrollees, and the curriculum and schedule of the school, will want to identify such student needs as:

- opportunities for participation in liturgical and other parish functions
- time for outdoor recreation
- opportunities for organized games
- rest
- nutrition
- homework time
- tutorial assistance
- time to pursue individual interest areas
- specialized instruction, e.g., music, dance
- individualized attention
- participation with non-extension program students in after-school functions, e.g., basketball team
- role models (male/female)
- community experiences, e.g., field trips, library visits
- attention to individual physical limitations

Needs of the school

Through consultation with the school administrator, the pastor and, as necessary, spokespersons of the appropriate parish and/or diocesan board(s), the planner will wish to ascertain matters of these types:

- Is the extension program expected to attract increased enrollment to the school and to what extent?
- Is the operation of the extension program expected to bring in additional revenue for total school operations and to what extent?
- Are extension program personnel expected to participate in total school activities and to what extent?
- Are extension program personnel expected to be concerned with total school security in the hours when school personnel are absent?
- Does the school have other priorities which should be reflected in the practices and policies of the extension program?
- What is the philosophy and practice of the school with respect to lower fees for low income families and how should this philosophy be carried out in the extension program?
- Are there special school schedules (e.g., minimum days) which need to be taken into account in extension program planning?
- What are the school rules and regulations which need to be consistently followed in extension program operations?
- What other programs does the school conduct during times of extension program operations and how are arrangements made for scheduling the use of shared facilities, e.g., a gymnasium?
- If there are shared personnel, e.g., a custodian, when are they needed by the school and when are they available for the extension program?

Community assessment

Prior to developing a program, the planner will wish to ascertain:

- What other before and after-school care options are available in the immediate community?
- What fees are other day care providers charging?
- What community resources are available for extension program use, e.g., park, library?
- What community institutions might provide volunteer personnel, e.g., a seniors home, a high school home economics department?
- What are the major employers in the area? What are their hours of operation? How can their employees be advised of the availability of the extension program at the school?

Facility assessment

Along with the school administrator, and possibly the pastor, the extension program planner will wish to tour the school and the larger parish plant to determine the following:

- availability of appropriate space for extension program operations (with consideration of any applicable governmental regulations which vary from state to state);
- availability of facilities for shared use: e.g., convent space, playground, cafeteria, gymnasium, auditorium, etc.;
- possibilities for movement of existing school programs in order to facilitate the initiation of an extension program;
- renovation and/or remodeling possibilities; and
- probable traffic flow and plant security operations.

In the selection of an appropriate room (or rooms) for extension program operations, the administrator may wish to review the following questions:

- Approximately how many students of varying grade levels will be served?
- Is the proposed extension program center adequate in size to house the number of attendees?
- Is the room readily accessible for parents to check in and check out their children?
- Can the room (or rooms) be set up to permit age level groupings, centers of interest, quiet study activities and rest time?
- Is the proposed facility close to lavatories?
- Does the room have its own source of water?
- Can the room be darkened for rest time or for audio-visual presentations?
- Is there space, or can space be created, for the storage of indoor and outdoor equipment and materials for extension program activities?
- Are there separate places for the extension program staff and the students to store their personal possessions (e.g. purses, lunches, coats?)
- Does the proposed facility lend itself to the preparation and serving of a nutritional snack to children?
- Is there adequate space for indoor activities during inclement weather?

Other investigations

The planner will also investigate the following questions:

- Are there existing personnel policies which would apply to the extension program?
- Will school liability insurance extend to the extension program or is additional coverage needed?

- Are there due process procedures for personnel and/or parents, and would such apply to the extension program?
- Can the school's emergency care and disaster action plan be applied to the extension program or will additional procedures have to be developed?
- Do state or local ordinances govern extension program facilities and/or operations? What are they? Are there cost implications for conformity to such ordinances?
- Are sources of ancillary support available for extension program operations? (e.g. governmental surplus properties, reimbursement for food and/or milk service, health services, etc.)

Suggestions for a Startup Sequence and Timetable

After a needs assessment is conducted and a commitment is made to provide a Catholic school age extension program, startup activities should be identified and a timeline established. A number of significant activities to consider and a possible timeline are listed below.

The following activities should be conducted four to six months prior to the program starting date:

- visit and observe other school-age extension programs;
- arrange for fire, health and safety inspections of proposed extension program facilities;
- develop extension program philosophy;
- send letter to parents of students already enrolled in school, announcing the extension program and requesting advance enrollment information;
- place announcement of program's formation in diocesan and community newspapers, school newsletters, and administrative organization bulletins;
- advise employers in the community of the formation of the program;
- obtain estimates for possible remodeling and/or renovation;
- estimate necessary equipment and furniture costs;
- develop budget plan, setting fees according to anticipated enrollment, program considerations, and anticipated staffing patterns; and
- review tentative budget with school administrator and/or appropriate board(s).

The following activities should be conducted three to four months in advance of the program starting date:

- follow up with families contacted through letters and/or announcements;
- collect advance enrollment deposits;
- inventory basic supplies, including furnishings and equipment, and develop a list of needs; and
- apply for special milk, breakfast, surplus property authorizations, as desired;

- contact local colleges and universities for potential staff referrals;
- contact the diocesan department of education for potential staff referrals; and
- speak to school's parent group and faculty about program plans.

The following activities should be conducted two months in advance of the program starting date:

- Draft a parent handbook, to include:
 - financial arrangements
 - check in and check out procedures
 - extension program philosophy
 - expectations for student behavior
 - typical program activities
 - nutrition program
 - emergency procedures
 - rules for health and safety
 - avenues for parental input and involvement
 - authorizations for persons to pick up a child
- draft an emergency card;
- review handbook and emergency card with principal; and
- draft staff job descriptions.

The following activities should be completed during the month preceding the opening of the program:

- print parent handbook, emergency cards;
- design sign in/sign out sheets, daily roll sheets, staff time sheets, and miscellaneous forms;
- interview and select staff;
- complete purchasing of supplies and equipment;
- meet with consultants, as appropriate, to organize program components;
- mail welcoming letter with parent handbook and emergency card to families whose students are enrolled;
- plan staff orientation and hold preliminary staff meeting;
- plan an open house;
- review arrangements for milk delivery; and
- attend school faculty meeting to acquaint teachers with the program.

Staffing an Extension Program



Usually the most difficult, and also perhaps the most important task for administration, is that of recruiting, interviewing, hiring and supporting extension program staff. The ultimate success of the program is dependent upon the people who work in it. A quality staff just doesn't happen; it must be consciously sought out and nurtured.

Recruiting, Interviewing, and Hiring

Once an extension program's goals and philosophy are determined, the administration will wish to identify those types of persons who can best function within the agreed-upon program philosophy and can best help the program realize its goals. While this may seem obvious and somewhat trite, experience has shown that extension program directors and staff persons are sometimes hired without adequate screening.

As much, if not more, care should be exercised in the selection of extension program personnel as is exercised in the selection of classroom teachers. Extension program staff work with a large number of children from single parent families, many of whom experience stress-filled lives. Rather than working exclusively with one age level or grade in a structured situation, the extension center employee often works with a wide age range of children in a less structured environment. While the classroom teacher usually comes in direct contact with parents on an infrequent basis, extension center staff interact with parents each day. Extension program parents receive a daily impression of the professionalism, concern, and mission of the entire parochial school from contacts with extension program staff members.

The extension program director

Key to the success of the program is the extension program director who should be responsible for program operations, supervision, and development. He or she should be considered a professional member of the faculty, a link to families whose children are enrolled in the program, a

resource person for the school's principal and staff, and an administrator/supervisor who functions in extension program matters with authority delegated by the principal.

Typical extension program director's responsibilities include:

- the preparation of an annual program budget;
- the fiscal management of the program operations;
- the recruitment and admission of students to the program;
- the selection, supervision and evaluation of other center staff members;
- the maintenance of a stimulating and varied schedule of activities appropriate for the students in a well-ordered environment;
- the maintenance of good working relationships with the total school and parish community; and
- positive interaction with parents.

While basic academic background and experience requirements for extension program directors may be contained in varying diocesan policies or within applicable regulations varying from state to state, the following minimal requirements would be appropriate:

- at least 24 semester hours of professional preparation at the college level in the field of child development or other closely related fields;
- at least 3 of the 24 semester hours in the area of administration/supervision;
- 3 years of experience working with elementary school age children (a suggested definition of one year of experience is at least 3 hours per day for 100 days in a year);
- three written references which verify successful experience; and
- transcripts which verify academic preparation.

The individual who is sought for an extension program director position should be someone who

- respects children and their parents;
- can communicate with children and their parents;
- can manage a budget;
- can supervise, evaluate, and encourage subordinate staff persons;
- identifies with the school's philosophy; and
- has a "public relations sense."

The entire extension program staff

Whether the program's care-givers are called "teachers" or "group leaders" or some other title, some general qualities should be established for ancillary personnel.

Certainly a minimum age and a minimum educational background are important factors. However, even more important are such characteristics as these:

- a genuine respect for children and their parents;
- an ability to listen to children;
- an awareness of appropriate activities for children;
- flexibility, coupled with consistency;
- a commitment to the philosophy and goals of the program; and
- an ability to project a positive role model for children.

Recruitment of extension program personnel

Just where does one look for quality staff? The school/parish community itself is often an excellent source of quality personnel. There is a "real people potential" that can be tapped. Perhaps there is a retired classroom teacher who might enjoy afternoons of child caring in the less structured extension program environment. A mother who has raised her own children might wish to rejoin the work force. College students are always looking for after-school employment, particularly in positions where practical experience might complement their academic work.

Diocesan departments of education are often contacted by job seekers, some of whom may be unaware of opportunities in the growing field of extension programming.

Local colleges and universities are natural sources for recruitment of part-time student help. Here it is particularly recommended that the extension program director establish personal contact with college or university professors in the areas of elementary or early childhood education, recreation, or physical education. Faculty recommendations can help target the application of qualified and interested students for extension program jobs. General college job placement services often result in a flood of applicants who are looking for any kind of work and may have little special interest in extension programs or children.

Young college students can bring a fresh zest to afternoon programming at an extension center. However, care should be taken not just to get someone "to fill a time slot," but to find someone who will fit into the "team"—who will complement the program's strengths and whose skills might compensate for a program's weaknesses.

Some selection process tips

Presumably the extension program director would have the delegated authority to interview and select program personnel, subject to approval by the principal.

Using a standard interviewing and hiring procedure is not only fair to applicants, but will protect the extension program director from making hasty judgments.

A clearly stated job description should be written to not only describe duties and responsibilities, but also to indicate lines and limits of authority (who is in charge of whom? of what?). Job applicants should be appraised of the extension program's philosophy and of its operational rules and

expectations (which should be contained in the program's parent handbook).

The employee selection process should include an applicant's completion of a standard job application form including a written statement of background, academic training, work experience and references; the verification of academic and work experience with educational institutions and former employers by the extension center director; and an oral interview between the applicant and the director.

Within the oral interview, the director should not "rehash" the information provided by the candidate on the completed application form, but should use the interview to elicit other information, such as the following:

- motivation for seeking employment in the extension center;
- strengths in areas of children's activities (e.g., basketball, art, music, etc.);
- attitudes toward discipline;
- opinions regarding families who use extended day care services;
- opinions about working mothers;
- personal identification with the Church; and
- comfort with the school's and the extension program's complementary philosophies.

In short, the interview should give the director a real insight into the person behind "all the right answers" and the written qualifications.

Immediately after the interview, the director should record impressions of the candidate, noting on a standard form those strengths and weaknesses perceived.

Once the list of candidates has been narrowed down, the director should notify those eliminated and, if possible, arrange for a second interview with the finalists. The second interview is an opportunity to "fill in gaps," answer questions and discuss concerns or problems.

Now the director, after consultation with the principal (and perhaps after the principal has sat in on the second interview), makes the final decision on hiring. The director should not settle on someone, about whom there are doubts, just to get a certain type. While the program might well need a musician to round out its activities offerings, if the director has lingering doubts about the musician's ability to work with existing staff or to relate to parents, it is better to skip the special skill in favor of a "team player."

Once the candidate has been selected and has accepted the job offer, other applicants should be so notified. The director should then set the formal hiring process in motion according to diocesan, school and/or extension program policies. Included within this formal hiring process should be the following:

- a contract or letter of understanding, signed by the authorized administrator and the new employee, which includes terms of employment, wages, benefits, etc.)
- a job description, signed by the new employee;

- a statement of adherence to the school and extension program philosophy, signed by the new employee;
- a statement of personnel policies, signed by the new employee;
- the completion of necessary tax withholding and, as applicable, medical insurance forms by the new employee; and
- the completion of any other governmentally required forms, such as tuberculin clearance and criminal records clearance.

Nurturing and Supporting

Typically, an extension program child spends four to six hours a day in the program. The quality of the program can have a significant and determining effect on the child. He or she may be blessed or devastated by daily life in the extension center. Recognizing the preciousness of each child entrusted to the parochial school's extension program, it is important to work to provide the best possible environment and the best possible role-modeling staff.

Care in hiring is but the first step in the creation of a committed staff community. A stable, secure and consistent environment for children exists only when the worth and professionalism of the adult staff is recognized and nurtured. Among other considerations, this means adequate salaries, job benefits, and opportunities for professional growth.

Far too often, programs exist wherein the principal personnel practice seems to be based on "how little we can pay them." In such cases, it is no wonder that there may be little staff stability, poor morale and, at best, a mediocre program for children.

Salaries

It appears that most diocesan departments of education have yet to incorporate the growing number of extension program personnel into standard diocesan-wide salary schedules. Most compensation decisions are made at the school site.

In determining a salary structure for extension program personnel, consideration should be given to the following:

- social justice;
- compensation for employees in other quality child care programs in the community;
- recognition of past experience and length of employment in the extension program;
- cost of living factors;
- compensation for overtime hours and/or additional job responsibilities; and
- program income from parental fees.

Job benefits

Usually extension program personnel can be covered within medical/dental, life insurance, and retirement programs of diocesan school systems. Sometimes, however, such coverage applies only to personnel who work 20 or more hours per week. To save fringe benefit employee costs, some day care programs deliberately limit staff hours to less than the operative minimum. Extension program administrators should recognize the "job worth" of a benefit package for employees. Social justice for the employee—whose stability, satisfaction and enthusiasm directly affect the quality of the program for children—should be considered in decisions about job benefits.

Professional growth

While workshops, institutes, fiscal incentives for additional course work, and conference attendance are all considered appropriate for classroom teachers, it appears that few such opportunities and incentives have been institutionalized in extension program operations. Scheduling of appropriate professional growth activities for extension program personnel is sometimes difficult due to the long hours of extension center operations. Compared to classroom teachers, extension program personnel typically have far less professional preparation, have less access to resource materials, and have fewer contacts with personnel of other child care programs.

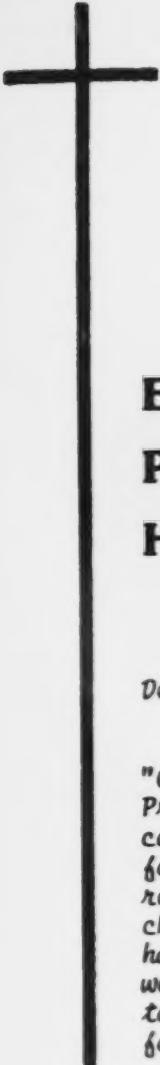
The program director who consciously works to provide for, and encourage, professional growth opportunities for the staff will be instrumental in improving the entire program. Through relevant inservice experiences, staff members not only acquire expanded skills in working with children but, perhaps more importantly, receive reinforcing recognition of their own worth to the program. Self esteem, program pride, and a sense of professionalism are demonstrated by extension program staff who are afforded skill-building inservice opportunities. A lack luster, "I'm just babysitting" attitude sometimes characterizes staff who are not challenged and renewed through professional growth experiences.

Samples of Parent Handbook and Forms



The following sample forms have been adapted and adopted by many extension programs. Readers may duplicate these forms for localized use:

Program Handbook
Pupil Application Form
Teacher Contract
Emergency Card



EXTENSION PROGRAM HANDBOOK



Dear Parents:

The following material is presented as an "Ongoing Handbook" for the St. Francis Extension Program. We have tried to include all information considered important to your child's safety and for the basic operation of the program, but we realize some things may have to be modified or changed. As the year progresses you, too, may have some ideas which should be included. We welcome your suggestions, as we all work together to make this a happy and worthwhile experience for both child and family.

Sincerely,

The Extension Program Staff

THE ST. FRANCIS ELEMENTARY EXTENSION PROGRAM

Open from 7:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. each school day, the Extension Program provides professional care, supervision, recreation and enrichment activities. It serves working families who desire both parochial school education and supplementary day care in a Christian environment for children enrolled at St. Francis of Assisi School in grades kindergarten through eight.

This professionally operated program allows children to experience a rich diversity of growth activities within a Catholic environment, activities planned to complement the philosophy and value systems of the school and family. Arts and craft projects, science experiments, games and recreation, naps for the younger children, and snack time are just a few of the growth activities planned. Also, there is time set aside for homework completion, with tutorial help and resource materials available.

Within a large family environment, the program strives to provide individual attention, security, consistency and fair treatment for children of working parents.

The Extension Program is staffed by an experienced, credentialed Director, and a number of devoted and committed teachers/teacher-aides. These people, employed on a full-time or part-time basis, work together to help each child grow in maturity and self-respect, as well as to maintain an atmosphere wherein respect and understanding for others is realized.

Fees are the sole support of the St. Francis Elementary Extension Program. It is not subsidized by the school or the parish.

IMPORTANT PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Emergencies/Safety

With the children's safety and well being in mind, it is MOST important that the parent fill out an emergency card, and then adhere to the instructions given.

One of the most important regulations concerns the child's leaving the premises of the Extension Program.

- Parents or guardians should not take children from the school yard or other areas without notifying the Extension Program staff and signing the child out.
- Extension Program personnel will not permit children to leave in taxis presumably sent by parents. If you intend to send a taxi for your child, you must notify the Extension Program director in advance in writing, or have a permanent request on file with the Extension Program director.
- Parents or guardians should not send persons whose SIGNATURES are not on the Emergency card to ask for the release of children. For the child's safety, the release will not be granted.

Another area of concern, and also related to the child's welfare, is the matter of telephone messages.

- Parents or guardians may wish to telephone the Extension Program asking that their child be directed to go to various places after school. As there is always a possibility that a person other than a parent

or guardian might telephone, such requests will not be granted.

- With the same potential problem in mind, Extension Program staff will not accept a telephoned request to call a cab for a child.

Fees and "Pick-Ups"

Additional areas of parental responsibility are in the matters of prompt fee payment, and prompt pick-up in the late afternoon.

As previously mentioned, the Program is entirely financed by a yearly fee, paid in ten monthly installments. Regular and prompt payment will assure the continuation of personnel and the provision of ample supplies, equipment, and snacks.

The fee charged is for the 180 school day year and is payable in ten monthly installments, each of which is due on the first school day of each month. This charge covers the cost of extension program operations both before and after school, each school day, including minimum classroom days.

If a parent or guardian fails to meet the Extension Program fee payment due on the first school day of each month, and does not make adequate arrangements with the Director, the child will not be allowed to continue in the program.

A \$10.00 charge will be assessed for all returned checks.

Staff members are employed only until 6:00 p.m. It is only common courtesy to respect the time of closure.

A substantial fee will be assessed for late pick-ups if the Director ascertains that a late pick-up, or a history of late pick-ups, occurs without justifiable cause.

SPECIAL PROVISIONS AND PROCEDURES

Illness or Accident

- In cases which appear to be of a minor nature, First Aid will be administered on the premises. (Medication will not be administered by mouth unless both a written statement from a physician detailing method, amount, and time schedule, AND a written statement from parent authorizing the staff to assist a child in taking such medication are on file.)
- In cases which appear serious, the Program Director will make an effort to carry out the instructions as given on the Emergency card.
- Parents who do not wish their child treated in any way should indicate such on the Emergency card, and should give directions to be followed in the space, "Special Instructions".
- Parents will be expected to make provision for taking sick children home. The Extension Program does not have facilities for transportation of children.
- If the home does not supply adequate emergency instructions, or if the instructions given cannot be followed at the time of the emergency, the Program staff will act according to their best judgement for the welfare of the child.

Homework

Each day at four o'clock a homework period is scheduled in the lunch room, with one or more teachers/teacher-aides available for tutorial help. It is the child's responsibility to acknowledge his/her assignment and then to use the resources available. The Extension Staff has no way of knowing what work, if any, has been assigned to which students.

Absences

- If a child is absent from the Extension Program for any reason, the parent is asked to please send a note upon the child's return.
- If you know in advance that a child will be absent from the center for any amount of time, please notify the Director in writing.

If a parent takes a child from the school for any reason, the Extension Program should be notified that day.

Toys from Home

It is requested that children not bring toys from home. Often these items are very personal and important, so the child feels they must be defended and protected. This is not consistent with the "sharing" atmosphere encouraged in our large family atmosphere. If a personal toy becomes a problem source, it will be confiscated until the child leaves for home. If this is persistent, the toy will be confiscated until the end of the month.

EXPECTATIONS FOR CHILDREN'S BEHAVIOR

As members of a Christian and caring community, the children will be expected to respect the staff, each other, and the materials and environment provided. They must never leave the building or grounds without explicit permission of the staff of the Extension Program. Such permission will only be granted by order of the parent or guardian.

In order to maintain a professional atmosphere, we ask that all staff members be formally addressed as adults -- that is, "Mr. Smith", "Mrs. Jones", or "Miss Andrews". Informal use of staff members' first names by students is inappropriate in the school setting.

FIELD TRIPS

Sometimes the occasion arises wherein the Extension staff finds that a sudden, short field trip would be in order. Perhaps it would be a kindergarten picnic in the park across the street, or maybe a walk to a framing shop to see how pictures are professionally framed. Often these impromptu excursions are most enriching experiences for the child. Because your permission is needed for the child to leave the premises, we have included a general/trip permission slip with this handbook. Please sign and return it to the Director if you wish your child to be included in these adventures. Please note: There will be careful supervision by the Extension staff at all times. If longer, more formal excursions are planned, permission slips will be sent home.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Of course we will celebrate the various holidays and holy days as the year progresses! The Director would welcome a meeting with any parent who would like to suggest further celebrations or special activities -- perhaps your child's birthday party, an idea for a special field trip to an interesting site with which you have an association, the visit to the extension program center by a ventriloquist friend of yours, etc. Your ideas and suggestions are most welcome!

Policy: What is an Extension Program?

Before and after school care for regularly enrolled children, Kindergarten through eighth grade. It is staffed by school personnel, serves only the children enrolled at the school and legally can operate only on days when school is in session. (This does include minimum days.)

THE EXTENSION CENTER
Saint Francis of Assisi School
2500 "K" Street
Sacramento, California 95816
(916) 443-0388

Dear

Thank you for your interest in the Extension Program at Saint Francis of Assisi Elementary School. The program operates from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. every day school is in session, including minimum days, and is available to those students enrolled at Saint Francis school.

The 180 day before-and-after school care program, including nutritional snacks, for children in grades 1 through 8 will be \$750.00. For Kindergarten children the fee will be \$950.00. As usual, the annual fee can be paid in ten monthly installments. For the 1985-86 school year, we will be initiating a 10% fee discount for the second and third children of a family.

If you are interested in enrolling your child/children in the Extension Program for next year, please fill out and return the form below by May 17. If you have any questions about the program, feel free to call, or if you would like to see the program in operation, stop by and visit!

Arlene McKelligott, Director

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Pupil Extension Program Application

CHILD or CHILDREN'S NAMES

SEX
M F

DATE of BIRTH
MONTH DAY YEAR

GRADE NEXT YEAR

CHILD or CHILDREN'S ADDRESS

Number Street City Zip Telephone ()

PARENT or GUARDIAN'S NAME

HOME ADDRESS Number Street City Zip Telephone ()

BUSINESS ADDRESS Number Street City Zip Telephone ()

Attached is my non-refundable deposit check of \$20.00, made payable to Saint Francis Extension.

Signature

Date

Contract

Contract between _____ hereinafter called Teacher and the Extension Program of St. Francis of Assisi Elementary School Extension Program.

Teacher hereby agrees to assume duties at the Extension Program, and shall be on duty beginning _____ and ending _____.

The St. Francis Extension Program agrees to pay the Teacher the hourly wage of _____, plus the following benefits:

The Director, in consultation with the school principal, may suspend or dismiss Teacher for conduct which would reflect adversely on the Catholic school and Church, or for violation of the terms of this contract, or for other good cause, including, but not limited to neglect of duty, physical or mental incapacity, inadequacy, insubordination, non-cooperation, lack of compliance with the philosophy of the Extension Program, or disruption of the intimate working relationship of the school, its extension program and the Community of Faith.

The Director, in consultation with the Principal, shall give written notice to the Teacher, on or before April 15th of the current school year, of intention to renew or not to renew this contract. This contract shall terminate upon dismissal or withdrawal of the Teacher.

Teacher

Date

Director

Date

Extension Program Emergency Card

ELEMENTARY EMERGENCY ADDRESS FORM AND SIGNATURE CARD

1	CHILD'S NAME	LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	BIRTH DATE
	HOME ADDRESS			TELEPHONE

ILLNESS OR ACCIDENT OR LEAVING CENTER PREMISES: In the event of apparently serious illness or accident, when I cannot be reached, I wish one of the following to be notified by telephone. They are authorized to act in my absence, and they have SIGNED their names on this card. They may also release my child from center:

2	NAME	ADDRESS	TELEPHONE
	NAME	ADDRESS	TELEPHONE

The following person(s) MAY NOT call for my child _____

DOCTOR'S NAME AND TELEPHONE. If one of the above cannot be reached, I wish my child to be taken to the EMERGENCY HOSPITAL

I wish any one of the following doctors to be notified:

☐ Yes ☐ No

3	NAME	TELEPHONE	NAME	TELEPHONE
	SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS			

PARENTS BUSINESS ADDRESS & TELEPHONE. The following telephone numbers may be used in cases of emergency:

4	MOTHER'S LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	BUSINESS ADDRESS	BUSINESS TELEPHONE
	FATHER'S LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	BUSINESS ADDRESS	BUSINESS TELEPHONE

5	I hereby give permission for my child to go home by himself and I assume all responsibility for him after he leaves the center.		6	SIGNATURE
	☐ Yes ☐ No			_____
			Departure time: _____	